

Forum on Conservation and Harvest Planning 2011 – An Overview

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It Started with some Questions

- 1. What advice can be offered on how to share when fish stocks are low?**
- 2. Conservation concerns for some stocks are expected to limit harvest on more abundant stocks. What advice or approach can be given on how to deal with situations such as this?**
- 3. What advice on how to address increasing uncertainty and unforeseen circumstances being faced in-season in fisheries management (e.g., unexpected circumstances, new data, etc...)**

Some Principles considered

- No prejudice to rights, title and existing treaty rights
- DFO needs to manage consistently with Sparrow They're sharing the reductions, but Sparrow says DFO needs to meet FSC needs before others
- More conservative/precautionary approach to pre-season planning and in-season management – hedge to conservation.
- Sustainability principle - Higher priority to FN's who can prove they are fishing in a sustainable manner
- conservation purposes ie: Higher priority to FN's that have access to only a few stocks
- Stewardship principle - Higher priority for those FN's that contribute to the management of the resource

4 Options Considered

Option 1 – FN FSC Work Group

- Under this approach the FN would form a Working Group which would manage Fraser FSC fisheries within allowable harvest levels. First Nations would fish to their needs from available allowable catch. The Working Group would work out any sharing issues amongst themselves. Conservation would be paramount and fisheries would be bound by conservation restrictions in each area and harvests constrained by such conservation requirements.
- Issues: DFO's role needs to be articulated.

Option 2 – Priority to FN with Limited opportunities

- This option is based on the 1996 Early Stuart management plan, and some additional letters and verbal presentations by some First Nations to DFO. The First Nations groups that resided in the terminal location (Stuart basin) were assigned priority access to these stocks as there are very few other Fraser stocks available for harvest to these groups.



4 Options Considered

Option 3 – Proportional Sharing

- This option is based on a compromise of all letters and verbal advice from the recent past years received by DFO as interpreted by DFO. A proportional sharing approach was the method adopted in 2007 when it became apparent in-season that the number of returning sockeye to the Fraser River was not sufficient enough to meet FSC needs. This method entailed taking the management targets catches for the three major regions (marine-260,000, lower Fraser-449,000 and mid-upper Fraser-300,000) where Fraser sockeye are harvested by First Nations for FSC needs.



4 Options Considered

Option 4 – Window of Opportunity

- This option is based on a clause in the April 3rd paper from First nations to DFO with some interpretation based on follow-up discussions. It could be used in combination with any of the other options described. This approach entails considering moving some FSC fisheries from main stem Fraser River areas to tributaries and could be broadened to include non-Fraser Rivers in coastal areas to reduce the pressures on Fraser stocks destined to the Fraser River.

Recommendation – Brenda G.

- DFO confirm commitment to developing & resourcing a facilitated Fraser Watershed process
- Mandated First Nation structure Confirmed Tier 1/Tier 2
- Better understanding between the parties regarding their respective goals and aspirations
- Move towards a consensual process with incentives
- Introduction of new initiatives, including exploring immediate steps towards new types of decision making and management arrangements.
- Operative number of FNs willing to explore the use of a broader table
- A DFO/FN working group could be established to consider and make recommendations on operational requirements

Other activities

- Evaluation of Forum Process 2008 by Paul Kariya
 - 1. Good Value
 - 2. More structure
 - 3. FSC priority
 - 4. Build trust
 - 5. Continue trying new approaches
 - 6. Focus on leadership engagement
- Develop a committed planning committee (agenda and content)
- Develop TOR



Terms of Reference

Purpose

- Plan effective Forum meetings in order to reflect Fraser River salmon stock status and harvest concerns/issues for upcoming fishing seasons.

Composition

- The Chairperson of the FRAFS Executive Committee will chair the meetings of the FPC, and will be responsible for providing direct communication linkages to the FRAFS EC and the FRAFS Operations Manager as appropriate.

Members

- One First Nation person and one First Nation alternate from the Fraser Watershed.
- One First Nation person and one First Nation alternate from marine approach area.
- One DFO staff member and one DFO alternate.



Terms of Reference cont...

Tasks

- To review and discuss preliminary Forum agenda topics provided by participants (committee members), and disseminate the proposed agendas to First Nations through the Secretariat and IMAWG; and, upon receipt of comments, finalize the format and agendas for the Forum on Conservation and Harvest Planning meetings, and the locations/dates for those meetings.
- Meet each Fall to plan a tentative schedule for upcoming Forum meetings from January through June, and in a timely manner disseminate the proposed schedule through the Secretariat and IMAWG requesting feedback on possible meeting date conflicts.
- Meet one month prior to each proposed meeting date to confirm the date, review the program proposed by DFO fisheries managers, and distribute meeting date/proposed agenda through the Secretariat requesting comments up to two weeks before the meeting.



Terms of Reference cont...

Tasks cont...

- Produce and disseminate a tightly focused final agenda two weeks prior to the meeting date.
- Determine the need for a facilitator, or a meeting chairperson, for the Forum meetings: provide draft TORs and a suggested candidate to the Secretariat and request the Secretariat to enter into a Letter of Agreement with the incumbent.



Terms of Reference cont...

Process

- Working group membership: FPC First Nation participants will be identified through IMAWG and FRAFS (one each), and DFO will assign the staff member they deem appropriate.
- Meetings: primarily by teleconference call and where necessary in person (first planning meeting, also possibly immediately before or immediately after a Forum meeting).
- Quorum: all members present.
- Decisions: by consensus.
- Reporting: to the FRAFS EC and the IMAWG.
- Review Terms of Reference as needed.
- Review FPC membership each November.